UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

PROVISIONAL

S/PV.2912
27 March 1990

ENGLISH

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND
NINE HUNDRED AND TWELFTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 27 March 1990, at 10.30 a.m.

President:	Mr. AL-ASHTAL	(Democratic Yemen)
Members:	Canada	Mr. FORTIER
	China	Mr. LI Luye
	Colombia	Mr. PEÑALOSA
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. ANET
	Cuba	Mr. MORENO
	Ethiopia	Mr. GOSHU
	Finland	Ms. RASI
	France	Mr. BLANC
	Malaysia	Mr. HASMY
	Romania	Mr. MUNTEANU
	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	Mr. SMIRNOV
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. RICHARDSON
	United States of America	Mr. WATSON
	Zaire	Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGEYA

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The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

EXPRESSION OF WELCOME TO THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ROMANIA

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): At the very outset of this meeting, I should like to welcome the new Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Aurel-Dragos Munteanu, who is attending our meetings for the first time. I wish him every success in his work.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

LETTER DATED 12 FEBRUARY 1990 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/21139)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): In accordance with decisions taken at the 2910th meeting, I invite the representatives of Israel, Jordan and Senegal to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber. I invite the representative of Palestine to take a place at the Council table.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Bein (Israel), Mr. Salah (Jordan) and Mrs. Diallo (Senegal) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber; Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine) took a place at the Council table.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iraq, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Yemen and Yugoslavia in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in

(The President)

accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Bendjama (Algeria), Mr. Al-Shakar (Bahrain), Mr. Moussa (Egypt), Mr. Menon (India), Mr. Sutresna (Indonesia), Mr. Al-Anbari (Iraq), Mr. Treiki (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Umer (Pakistan), Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar), Mr. Al-Kahtany (Saudi Arabia), Mr. Awad (Syrian Arab Republic), Mr. Ghezal (Tunisia), Mr. Oudovenko (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic), Mr. Sallam (Yemen) and Mr. Pejic (Yugoslavia) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 23 March 1990 from the Chargé d'Affaires ad interim of the Permanent Mission of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, which reads as follows:

"I have the honour to request that the Security Council extend an invitation per rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Ekmeleddin A. Ansay, Permanent Observer of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to the United Nations, during the Council's discussion of the item entitled 'The situation in the occupied Arab territories'."

That letter has been published as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/21203. If I hear no objection I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 to Mr. Ekmeleddin A. Ansay.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now resume its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The first speaker is the representative of Egypt. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. MOUSSA (Egypt)(interpretation from Arabic): As I begin my statement today, allow me, Sir, to express to you my personal satisfaction at seeing you preside over the meetings of the Security Council during this month. Your long experience and renowned wisdom will be invaluable in guiding the proceedings of the Council in the important issues before us, which have long been central to the concerns of the Arab world as well as of the international community, issues that present a challenge to the credibility of the emerging trends in international relations.

On this occasion I should also like to salute, through you, your brotherly country, Democratic Yemen, with which Egypt has amicable and cordial relations and shares common Arab origins. Expressions of appreciation are also warranted for the able and exemplary manner with which the Permanent Representative of Cuba guided the Security Council's deliberations during the month of February.

There prevails today widespread recognition that yesterday's world is a page in history that is being turned. These are historic times of momentous change, with political, economic and ideological manifestations that indicate the emergence of a new era in international relations in a new world whose birth would coincide with the commencement of the twenty-first century, which is not far off. Those developments compel us - particularly here in the Security Council - to reflect on them and on the actions we have taken and the lessons that can be drawn from them. They compel us seriously to contemplate and search deep within ourselves as we embark upon the safe navigation of mankind's future course, far from the pitfalls of extremist policies and practices prevalent during recent decades of cold war, polarization, hegemony, discrimination, occupation and colonialism.

The overwhelming sea of change we witness today provides us with an auspicious and unique opportunity to readjust our course towards a world of juster laws that are universally applied, a world where ethics are dominant and principles

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(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

respected, a truly democratic world that is virtuous and fair and where human rights are fully respected, without selectivity or discrimination, where peoples can exercise their lawful rights and live in equality.

The most important document of the twentieth century is, beyond a doubt, the Charter of the United Nations. The principles and purposes enbodied therein were the genesis of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the conventions on humanitarian law, which define the rights of individuals and peoples and call for their fulfilment, demanding that they be respected by all.

One can justifiably draw the conclusion that the anomalies of yesterday's world were either a direct consequence of the lack of respect for the provisions of those solemn international undertakings or the result of their application in a discriminatory and unjust manner. If we allow those practices to become further entrenched and to continue with us from one century to another, from era to era, we shall ultimately have confined international relations in these new times to the parameters of the past.

The question before the Council today involves issues that raise all of those concerns as a result of Israel's settlement practices in the occupied Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem, which involve the transfer of parts of its population, including new immigrants that have arrived in the thousands in recent weeks. No country in the world community has ever recognized the legitimacy of Israel's occupation of those lands.

Our point of departure in dealing with this question is of paramount importance. Is it really an exercise of human rights, or, rather, is it an attempt, under the pretext of human rights, to establish a fait accompli, even if illegal?

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

Yes, article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms the right of everyone to freedom of movement and residence, as well as the right of everyone to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country. Yes, article 12 of the International Covenant on Civilian and Political Rights affirms the same rights. In that vein my response to the question is that the emigration of Soviet Jews, or others, to Israel of their own volition - and provided they also have the right of return consistent with the international legal norms just mentioned - is a development with which we do not take issue from this perspective. However, certain criteria should be applied to that emigration to ensure that those participating in it are not settled in the occupied Arab territories.

It is incontestable that the settlement of immigrants in the West Bank and the Gaza district is an illegal act, an act that has to be assessed from several different perspectives. If enabling immigrants to leave their country of origin results in their participation in the occupation of Arab lands and contributes to the expulsion of the indigenous population, in contravention of relevant international rules and norms, we are facing an extremely dangerous predicament. It presents a paradox in which humanitarian law is violated in the name of human rights with the piecemeal application of selective criteria, a practice that has been the root cause of numerous conflicts over the years, a practice that must be terminated once and for all in the context of the new era in international relations.

Article 49 of the fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War prohibits the occupying Power from transferring parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies. Consequently, any change in the demographic composition of the Palestinian territories occupied

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

since June 1967, including Jerusalem, through the settlement of immigrants constitutes a flagrant violation of the said provisions, in addition to being incompatible with the spirit of the Convention as a whole, and thus becomes illegal.

Similarly, the measures taken by Israel, the occupying Power, to annex parts of the occupied Palestinian territories is a change in the legal status that has no legal basis. That was clearly and resoundingly reaffirmed by the Security Council in resolution 465 (1980) of 4 March 1980, adopted unanimously, which determined that all measures taken by Israel to change the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure or status of the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, or any part thereof have no legal validity and constitute a flagrant violation of the fourth Geneva Convention. In that regard I would like to recall that the United States Government at the highest level recently once again publicly reaffirmed the inadmissibility of establishing settlements in the occupied territories in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

Over and above the legal aspects of the question, certain conclusions can be drawn regarding the future intentions of Israel, the occupying Power, from the practice of altering the demographic composition of the occupied territories, intentions that, if proved true, would entail actions in blatant violation of a cardinal principle of the United Nations Charter, namely, the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force, which is the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

At this juncture, I am obliged to reiterate Egypt's demand that the principles and legal norms that the international community has confirmed as a basis for the contemporary world order and international relations in time of war or peace be fully and faithfully upheld, and that we ensure respect for the humanitarian principles that were the basis for the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949. The Convention's provisions are unambiguous and conclusive, leaving no room for interpretation or qualifications that would allow for anything but full respect for all its provisions by all States. International legitimacy and the rule of law must reign supreme and unquestioned. Anything else would lead the world into chaos and anarchy.

Although responsibility for ensuring respect for the Convention, pursuant to article 1, rests upon the High Contracting Parties, which should unanimously respond to the settlement practices in the occupied territories that are before the Council today, this in no way diminishes the responsibilities of the Israeli Government in the matter, as was clearly stated by the representative of the Soviet Union at our last meeting. Israel should ensure that immigrants are not allowed to settle in areas where settlement is prohibited by international law - that is, in occupied territories. Israel's obligations and responsibilities as the occupying Power are clearly and unambiguously defined by the relevant international Convention and legal norms.

Although we are not gathered here to discuss the rights of individuals or groups to emigrate, nor the right of any State to enable the exercise of this right, to allow for their exit and return or to receive immigrants, Egypt must state that it has followed the ongoing settlement practices with increasing concern and alarm. Egypt believes that immigration to Israel, coupled with settling Israeli civilians or immigrants in the occupied territories, constitutes a serious

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

threat to the prospect of realizing a fundamental prerequisite for the success of the peace process in the Middle East - that the intentions and actions of each of the concerned parties remain compatible with this process and sustain credibility. How can the process be sustained, or credibility be maintained, while immigrants flocking to Israel settle in the occupied territories and at the same time deportees are not allowed to return to their homes and land?

How can any endeavour to build confidence among the Israelis and Palestinians succeed, as a step towards settlement of the Arab-Israel conflict in a comprehensive and just manner, if Israel continues these policies and its practices? We hear some Israeli officials complaining irresponsibly about the need for a greater, stronger Israel, in disregard for international law, the principles of justice, the requirements of regional stability and the elements necessary for a peaceful settlement and the establishment of peace.

As the Foreign Minister of Egypt recently declared in his statement to the Arab League Foreign Ministers' meeting in March,

"It is difficult for us to reconcile ourselves to this immigration at the expense of stability, security and peace in the Middle East."

All of this occurs while the Palestinian people in the occupied territories continue their glorious intifadah against occupation, while living deprived of their basic human rights and subject to Israeli repression and practices that have been condemned and deplored repeatedly by the international community. Just recently, Mr. Jimmy Carter, former President of the United States, commenting on the Israeli Government's treatment of the Palestinian people under occupation, said that it was depriving people under its control of their basic human rights, demolishing homes, and still putting people in prison without charges for as long as a year.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

Once again I ask all representatives: Do some human rights have priority over others? Can they be exercised at the expense of other rights? Shall some nations remain deprived of their basic rights, in a world proud of its civilization, where the fulfilment of human rights is accorded the higher priority?

We all share the responsibility for safeguarding human rights throughout the world. Foremost among them are the rights of oppressed peoples living under occupation.

In conjunction with this, the international community is duty bound to safeguard the endeavours for peace in the Middle East at this critical stage in the peace process. We must not allow anyone to waste this unique opportunity to achieve tangible progress towards a reconciliation between the Jewish and Palestinian peoples, a historic reconciliation ensuring for both equal rights, as a worthy contribution to the peaceful, just and permanent settlement of the Middle East conflict.

The two super-Powers have an instrumental role to play on both counts. In recognition of this role, Egypt has addressed the leadership of those two countries at the highest level, calling upon them to ensure that the rights of the Palestinian people shall not be jeopardized by increased immigration into Israel.

Today I should like in this Council, on behalf of the Egyptian Government, solemnly to call upon Israel to adopt a constructive stand on the question before us, in a manner commensurate with its importance, and compatible with the extremely sensitive and delicate stage of the peace process.

I call upon Israel to desist from its inhumane, repressive measures against the Palestinian people in the occupied territories.

I call upon Israel to terminate any settlement activity in the occupied territories, including Jerusalem, and not to settle immigrants in any of the territories occupied in 1967.

(Mr. Moussa, Egypt)

The Security Council, the international body with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, also has a solemn obligation in this regard. It is imperative that the Council unequivocally reaffirm once again that Israeli settlement practices in the occupied Palestinian territories have no legal basis.

Here I wish to state the Egyptian position, as follows.

First, we stress the applicability of the fourth Geneva Convention to the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, as well as the need for full respect for the Convention, which prohibits any change in the demographic composition or legal status of the occupied territories, or the transfer of parts of the occupying Power's civilian population to those territories.

Secondly, establishing settlements in the occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem, is an illegal act and an obstacle to peace.

Thirdly, we call on Israel to desist immediately from establishing settlements in those territories or transferring part of its population or immigrants to them and to desist from any action prohibited by the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Fourthly, we stress the responsibility of all States Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to ensure respect for the Convention.

Fifthly, we reaffirm the importance of adopting specific arrangements and measures to monitor and verify the development of the issue.

In conclusion, I once again urge all representatives to spare no effort in assiduously supporting the peace process in the Middle East. Let us now take a small step at the outset of the 1990s towards peace in the Middle East, a large step on the road to affirming our humanity.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank the representative of Egypt for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Yemen. I invite him to take a plac at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. SALLAM (Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): My dear friend the Permanent Representative of South Yemen, it is for me a personal pleasure and a source of great satisfaction to see the representative of South Yemen, a distinguished figure and diplomat, presiding over the work of the Council this month. Yemen as a whole takes pride in seeing one of its sons, distinguished by his vast experience and patriotic struggle, as well as his wisdom and skill as a diplomat, presiding over the Council's work. As the representative of North Yemen, I wish to express my full confidence in the success of the deliberations of the Council under the guidance of my friend and colleague.

I would also take this opportunity to congratulate the Permanent Representative of Cuba, who presided over the Council's work last month.

On the 21st of this month, the people of Namibia celebrated their independence. We congratulate them, but we also remember that the Namibian people's victory over injustice, oppression and servitude was destined to be. The Namibian people has made great sacrifice and the blood of its sons and daughters has been shed to regain its independence. It deserves our respect. Peoples that disregard the rights of other peoples and trample upon their dignity have no place among us or in our contemporary world, which has enshrined justice and the fulfilment of Treaties on the basis of respect for international law, the United Nations Charter and human rights.

It is not possible to settle the problems of any people at the expense of another people. The far-reaching changes that have taken place in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe have prompted a massive flow of Jewish emigrants towards Palestine, which now threatens the interests of the people of Palestine as well as the national security and integrity of the Arab territories. This wave of emigration recalls to the Arab mind other similar waves of Jewish emigration towards Palestine in the past, and the massacres of Deir Yassin, Kafer Kasim,

(Mr. Sallam, Yemen)

Qibya and Nahalin, carried out to terrorize Palestinians, to force them to leave their lands and abandon their goods, and to turn them into exiles in their own lands for decades.

The activities of Israeli soldiers and settlers against women and children is an ignominious crime that truly discredits peoples and governments that witness these crimes against the Palestinian people and yet remain passive while professing dedication to freedom and human rights.

I should like to report information that appeared in a report of Amnesty International dated January 1990. On page four, it speaks of activities directed against young persons and children, some of them only three or four years old, all of whom were killed by shots fired into their heads at gunpoint or at the most from a distance of some 10 metres. I quote:

"Amnesty International has obtained proof of flagrant cases of abusive resort to force by Israeli forces. For example, Rana al-Misri, a young girl 13 years of age, was shot in the head with a marble-type bullet in the afternoon of 7 January, in Nablus. It appears the shot was fired from a few metres away.

"On 27 February Atwa Harzalla, a student at the university, 26 years of age, and four other students were returning from a neighbouring village. When they arrived at the centre of their own village, one of the soldiers standing there gave them a warning, and Harzalla received four shots in the head.

"On 19 March, while a young boy 11 years old was playing soccer, a convoy of soldiers entered his village, Sallat al-Hirithiya, on the West Bank, apparently to warn the inhabitants that it was planned to destroy certain dwellings. While the soldiers were moving towards the village, the children ran towards a nearby field to see what was happening. It is not clear

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whether the children began throwing stones, but in any event one of the soldiers emerged from his vehicle and opened fire without warning. Samir al-Arouri was shot to death, with a bullet in the neck, and fell to the ground. It is reported that the soldier then opened fire on two other young boys. Nu'man al-Jaradat, a 17 year-old youth, was shot in the head. On the same day Asaad Hamoudeh, 14 years old, was walking along a street in Gaza, returning home, when a soldier positioned on the terrace of a nearby building opened fire on him without warning, and he was shot in the head.

"On 30 March, in the village of Dar Salah, on the West Bank, early in the afternoon, border guards arrived looking for demonstrators, who were working in nearby fields. Salim Mubarak was working in a field near her house. One of the soldiers involved aimed at her from a distance of 200 metres without warning, and she also was shot in the head.

"On 14 April, student Basil Ba'areh, an 18-year-old, was walking in the street with two other young people. An Israeli soldier asked him to halt. It is reported that Ba'areh began to run and soldiers fired at him. He received a bullet in the back of the neck, and he fell to the ground. He got up and continued running, but other soldiers surrounded him and opened fire on him, and he received a bullet in the head.

(Mr. Sallam, Yemen)

"On 8 April, in Jenin, Mahir Shalbok, a 13-year old youth, was leaving his house when he heard cries addressed to soldiers who were asking people to evacuate the area. They opened fire on him. He was prevented from entering his house and also received bullets in the head".

All of these cases are drawn from page 5 of the Amnesty International Bulletin of Information of January 1990.

How can we explain the fact that Israeli soldiers take such good aim against Palestinian children and shoot them in the head? What is the difference between Pol Pot and Shamir? Should we condemn to death a child who throws rocks to resist oppression by an Israeli occupier? Do Palestinian children truly deserve the death penalty because they scrawl on the walls, brandish a Palestinian flag, attempt to seize magnetic identity cards or to escape Israeli soliders who were chasing them from their homes? Can we truly call such measures "harsh measures to maintain order"?

What can we say about the wave of Jewish immigrants that is reinforcing the Israeli forces? It seems that the first wave of Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union was led there to exercise the new art of firing upon Palestinian children. No, this is a new wave of terrorism launched by the Israeli Government against the Palestinians to force them to leave their lands and property, in pursuance of its policy of expansion, in order once again to establish new settlers - Soviet Jews - in the occupied territories.

The Council has adopted numerous resolutions on this subject, notably resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), as well as others, such as resolutions 446 (1979) and 465 (1980). In all of those resolutions, the Security Council called upon Israel, the occupying Power, scrupulously to respect the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, to abrogate all previous measures it had adopted and to desist

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from any step likely to alter the demographic or physical character of Palestine as well as the territories occupied since 1967, including the Holy City of Jerusalem.

But Israel has refused to comply with the Security Council, despite the fact that Palestinian leaders have responded favourably to international détente and the relaxing of international tensions and despite their contribution to resolving the Palestinian problem through the adoption of a rational and wise policy aimed at creating conditions favourable to the beginnings of a dialogue and the achievement of peace.

That new Palestinian policy was made clear in resolutions adopted at the Algiers summit, resolutions that opened up new prospects for a just peace in the region. However, the Israeli leaders have chosen to set up obstacles on the path to peace in the Middle East and have pursued their plans of expansion by establishing hundreds of thousands of Soviet or other Jewish settlers in the occupied Palestinian territories.

The delegation of Yemen does not ask the Soviet Union to prevent those Jews from emigrating to anywhere in the world they choose. That is their legitimate right. But the Soviet Union could dampen the effects of this wave of emigration, curb it or postpone it at least until peace is established in Palestine. Emigrés should not be exploited to aggravate tensions in Palestine.

The Charter of the United Nations also provides for the imposition of military, economic and political sanctions against countries that do not respect Security Council resolutions. It is possible to ask the United States to suspend the granting of financial aid to Israel, so as to compel that country to participate in direct negotiations with the parties concerned within the framework of the international peace conference on the Middle East, and to hold talks with the Palestinian party and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), its sole

(Mr. Sallam, Yemen)

legitimate representative. This body can also undertake an urgent initiative to save Palestinian children who are dying day after day in the streets of the occupied Arab territories. We have great confidence in the Council.

I should like to quote the words of the President of the Yemen Arab Republic and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces during a visit to the White House in late January.

"We are certain that the United States of America - a country that is based upon the sacredness of freedom and equality, that proclaims the right of peoples to self-determination and is dedicated to human rights as one of the cornerstones of international legality - will make efforts to oblige the Israeli leaders to accept peace and to respect international resolutions aimed at enabling the Palestinian Arab people to determine its own fate, to recover its legitimate and inalienable rights, and to establish an independent Palestinian State on its territory under the leadership of the PLO, its sole legitimate representative, because solution of the Palestinian problem is a sine qua non for building peace in the Middle East".

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank the representative of Yemen for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Tunisia. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. GHEZAL (Tunisia) (interpretation from Arabic): Mr. President, my delegation is very pleased to see sisterly Democratic Yemen, which you represent, presiding over the Security Council this month. We wish to congratulate you and to express our full confidence that, given your personal qualities, wide diplomatic experience and extensive knowledge of the United Nations, you will successfully guide the business of the Council. I should like to take this opportunity to express to your predecessor, Mr. Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada, Permanent Representative of Cuba, our thanks and appreciation for the skill and wisdom with which he presided over the Council last month.

I wish at the outset to pay a tribute to the Permanent Representative of Jordan for the statement he made before the Council on behalf of the Group of Arab States, including my country, on the item of which the Council is seized today.

The Tunisian Government has joined the entire world community in denouncing recent statements emanating from Israel, especially at the end of last January, which speak of its designs to establish what it calls Greater Israel and of its intentions to settle Soviet Jews in the occupied Palestinian territories. In a statement issued on 31 January 1990 by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Tunisia the Tunisian Government denounced and condemned these provocative statements, aggressive intentions and expansionist plans announced by Israel to the whole world at a time when the international community was uniting its efforts with a view to achieving a peaceful, just and comprehensive solution to the Palestinian question, guaranteeing the Palestinian people its legitimate rights. My Government called upon the great Powers, international forums and world opinion to shoulder their responsibilities by opposing Israel's practices in the occupied territories. The Tunisian Government, which has consistently expressed its appreciation for the unwavering position of principle of the Soviet Union regarding the Palestinian cause, also called upon that country to thwart all manoeuvres by Israel to attract

(Mr. Ghezal, Tunisia)

Soviet nationals and make them a part of its expansionist plans, to the detriment of the indigenous population, which has inalienable rights to the land, including Jerusalem.

Those are extremely serious statements which could lead to grave actions constituting blatant violations of international law and of the rights of the Palestinian people in its land and result in blocking all peaceful attempts at solving the Middle East problem. The whole world has of course been unanimous in condemning these Israeli statements and objectives, which are contrary to international law and conventions and in open defiance of the United Nations Charter. This has been confirmed by the Human Rights Committee in a resolution on these Israeli statements, adopted without objection on 16 February in Geneva; the members of the European Economic Community (EEC) have again reaffirmed the relevant principles in their statement issued on 31 January, singling out the danger inherent in such statements and the fact that they undermine international law and conventions and jeopardize opportunities for peace in the region. The United States has also reaffirmed its position before the Human Rights Committee that Israeli settlements in occupied Arab lands, including Jerusalem, constitute an obstacle to peace in the Middle East, as stated by President Bush recently.

We have noted with satisfaction the deep transformations in the countries of Eastern Europe and the steps taken for the establishment of democracy and human rights there, including freedom of movement and the right to travel abroad and return to one's country. As we are all aware, these developments have had an impact the world over. But what has Israel done? It has decided to perfect its designs and attempt to turn the right of the Jews of the Soviet Union to emigrate into a tool to help it take away the rights of the Palestinians in their land, using it as an excuse and a way of achieving its aims in what it calls Greater Israel, at the expense of the Palestinian people and neighbouring Arab peoples.

(Mr. Ghezal, Tunisia)

In this connection Israel has even deprived Soviet Jews of their right to a destination of their choice. It has compelled them to go only to Israel, once they leave the Soviet Union. Everyone knows that the majority of them would have preferred another destination. The entire world applauded the action taken by the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries with regard to travel and emigration, but it should prevent this emigration from becoming, directly or indirectly, an organized emigration aimed at achieving exactly the opposite of what was the original intention, for this emigration will result in a massive transfer of population. It is well known that it will involve not hundreds or even thousands; Israel's goal is to attract approximately 1 million Jews from the Soviet Union. All significant and relevant parties should desist from giving any direct or indirect assistance to Israel to settle any of its citizens or any of the immigrant Jews in the occupied territories. That was affirmed by the Security Council in paragraph 6 of its resolution 465 (1980), to which I have referred.

(Mr. Ghezal, Tunisia)

In that connection, we appreciate the Soviet Union's halting of direct flights from the Soviet Union to Israel; in principle, that gives Soviet Jews leaving the Soviet Union the opportunity upon arrival at their stop-over freely to choose their final destination. We also welcome the statement that émigrés who wish to return to their country are free to do so. We welcome too the programme by Jewish organizations in the United States to receive 8,000 Jewish emigrants from the Soviet Union and finance their settlement in the United States; that would be in addition to the limited number the United States Government has permitted to settle in the United States.

If Soviet Jews' enjoyment of their rights should mean that Palestinians are deprived of their inalienable rights, that would be an injustice in terms of human rights. Are the Palestinians doomed to pay the price of oppression in their own land, even though they have committed no crime against anyone? It is they who are the victims in their own land.

Israeli statements and objectives and what we learn from them about Israeli intentions and practices in the occupied territories necessitate urgent measures by the United Nations, and the Security Council in particular, especially since those practices constitute a grave threat to peace in the Middle East and to security in the region. The statements made by the Prime Minister of Israel are no mere words; they reflect the policies and designs the Israelis intend to carry out, and are reflected daily in practices by the occupying authorities in the occupied territories. Very recently, those authorities have begun to build 2,000 housing units for settling new emigrants. In addition, Israel has begun to establish new settlements in the vicinity of Arab Jerusalem as part of its plan to create settlements in the entire area around Al-Quds Al-Sharif and to Judaize the area.

(Mr. Ghezal, Tunisia)

A new settlement was recently established at Kafr Qadoum in the occupied Palestinian territory. Zionist colonialism is even striving to establish a new settlement in southern Lebanon, close to the village of Rashaya Al-Fakhar, in addition to the existing Al-Arqoub settlement for Falasha Jews.

As we know, big, strong and rich countries limit immigration in order to avoid its adverse affects. How can we accept the settlement of 1 million immigrants in that limited - and explosive - area of the Middle East? In the near future this would add hundreds of thousands of soldiers to the armed forces of an entity which is military in nature. This factor has to be added to the declared expansionist intensions of Israel and its plans to deprive the Palestinians of their lands.

If logic has any meaning, it is neither incorrect nor exaggerated to say that this plan threatens the rights of the Palestinian people and the security of the entire region. Colonialism has been eradicated in Africa; it has been nearly eradicated throughout the world, except for Palestine and the remaining occupied Arab territories, where colonialism remains, planning further expansion and corruption.

We recently marked the independence of Namibia, which will soon be a full Member of the United Nations. The historic role of the United Nations and the Security Council with the support of the international community, and of international pressure upon South Africa, proves the capability of the United Nations and its effectiveness in solving complex international problems and in establishing peace among nations. In its handling of the Namibia question the United Nations also proved that it is not aligned with any party, as some had claimed, but rather works towards the achievement of rights, peace and justice.

(Mr. Ghezal, Tunisia)

The tragedy of the Palestinian people has continued for more than 40 years, and the plight of the Palestinian people in the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Jerusalem has continued for more than 22. The Palestinian people's heroic intifadah is now in its third year, and a new tragedy is in the making. The Palestinian people is guilty of no crimes; no logic or morality can justify its treatment.

Through its heroic intifadah, its constitutional organization and the leadership of its revolution and its State, the Palestinian people has proved that it is peaceful and unilaterally committed to peace and to the rejection of violence - a view endorsed by the United States Government - at a time when Israel continues its expansionist practices. That is why we believe the Security Council, the United Nations and the entire international community should seriously shoulder their responsibilities to establish a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

The Security Council, primary custodian of international peace and security bearing historic responsibility with respect to the 40-year tragedy of the Palestinian people, should confront the Middle East problem and the Palestinian question in order to achieve a peaceful, just and comprehensive solution in conformity with the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly and the Charter of the United Nations.

The Security Council has recently dealt with regional disputes all over the world. How can the Palestinian question and the Middle East problem be the exceptions to this? We call today upon the Security Council to shoulder its responsibility and end that strange situation. It should take a decision and implement it with a view to achieving peace and justice in the Middle East.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank the representative of Tunisia for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. AWAD (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): I am happy to express to you, Mr. President, our pleasure at seeing you, the representative of a fraternal Arab country, presiding over the Security Council this month. I should also like to take this opportunity to express to your predecessor, Ambassador Alarcon de Quesada of Cuba, our deep appreciation for his efforts as President of the Council for the month of February.

The Security Council is meeting today to resume its consideration of the question of the emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel. The position of the Syrian Arab Republic is perhaps best reflected in the resolution adopted on 13 March 1990 by the Council of the League of Arab States at its recent meeting in Tunisia, in which it expressed, inter alia, respect for the principles of human rights and for the fact that no human being should exercise his rights at the expense of the rights of any other human being. It affirmed that the mass emigration of Jews from the Soviet Union and eastern Europe to Palestine and the occupied Arab territories constitutes a violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and of the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, which prohibits the occupying Power from deporting the indigenous population from, or settling persons under its jurisdiction to, the occupied territories.

In addition, the resolution deplored Israel's settlement policies as constituting an act of aggression against the rights of the Palestinian Arab peoples to their land, their country and their identity and as representing a threat to Arab national security. It warned of the dangers inherent in such practices with regard to the prospects for achieving a just, peaceful and

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comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, aggravating as they do the tensions in the region and jeopardizing international peace and security; it called upon the international community to act to put an end to the emigration of Soviet Jews to Palestine and the occupied Arab territories and to guarantee all the national rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to return, as set forth in General Assembly resolution 194 (III) of 11 December 1948; it also affirmed the illegality of the Zionist settlement of the occupied Arab territories, calling for an immediate end thereto and for the creation of international machinery to monitor and follow Israeli activities in that regard.

President Hafiz al-Assad, in a statement on 8 March of this year, outlined the position of the Syrian Arab Republic on the emigration question, saying that:

"The new, intense Jewish emigration to Palestine, over and above the false and invalid bases used to justify it, has been imposed upon the world community under the pretext of man's freedom to emigrate. What freedom of emigration are they talking about? Is it not obvious that here the word 'freedom' really means 'aggression'? Freedom to emigrate does not mean freedom to occupy the territory of others or freedom to drive them from their homeland, especially since these new emigrants have not come out of a need for employment or the necessities of life. Rather, they have come to acquire land and to drive out and persecute the indigenous population. Man's right to emigrate is transformed into its opposite when it is changed to the right to occupy the territories of others and to expel them from their country and their homeland."

It is truly ironic for Israel to claim the right to represent the world's Jews, be they Arab or European, Oriental, Occidental or American, because that in itself constitutes a racist affront to States, makes a sham of citizenship and raises doubts about the allegiance of the Jew everywhere. The Zionist enterprise

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regards Soviet Jews as its most important immigrant reserve. That importance, owing to that group's high level of education and specialization, has now been revealed, and it has been confirmed by a statement made by Israeli Prime Minister Shamir, as quoted by Agence France Presse on 15 January of this year. The Prime Minister said: "Intensive emigration demands a greater Israel."

An article in the Israeli daily, Yedioth Aharanoth, quoted Shamir as stating that:

"while many affirm that time is against us, time is what has brought us this emigration. Within five years, you will not recognize the country. Everything will change; the people will change and the lifestyle will change. Everything will be larger and stronger. The Arabs around us are desperate and in a state of panic because they cannot halt the natural influx of the Jewish people into their land."

Those statements are further proof of the determination of Israel's leaders to defy the will of the international community as embodied in the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

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Foremost among them is Security Council resolution 465 (1980), which

"Determines that all measures taken by Israel to change the physical character, demographic composition, institutional structure or status of the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, or any part thereof have no legal validity and that Israel's policy and practices of settling parts of its population and new immigrants in those territories constitute a flagrant violation of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and also constitute a serious obstruction to achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East". (resolution 465 (1980), para. 5)

The human resources which Israel is counting on are much bigger than anyone had expected. Therefore, the reports about Israel's desire to bring in one million Soviet Jews should not be considered to be exaggerations.

There is a long-standing intention to forge ahead with the establishment of the greater Zionist State in the Arab region by means of expanding at the expense of the neighbouring States. That is evidenced by the fact that Israel annexed the Syrian Golan - part and parcel of the territories of the Syrian Arab Republic - which Israel continues to occupy illegitimately, in flagrant defiance of United Nations resolutions, and especially Security Council resolution 497 (1981). Syria considers that the settlement of Jewish immigrants, whether new or old, in the Syrian Arab Golan is an act of aggression against Syria's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Syria also regards their settlement in any other part of the occupied Arab territories to be an equally grave matter.

A close study of the course of the Zionist movement since its inception clearly reveals its absolutely serious intent to seek to achieve its colonialist

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designs. An example of that is the establishment of Israel itself. After the conclusion of the first Zionist Congress in Basle in 1898, Herzl came out of the Conference to declare that the State of Israel would be established within 5, 10 or 50 years. In fact, Israel was established in 1948, 50 years to the day after that declaration. That means that the first Zionist Congress had planned for 50 years of continuous action to establish Israel.

Hence the new wave of immigration can only be viewed as marking a new war which Israel will wage against the Arab countries when local and international circumstances permit. That shows the Zionist State's lack of seriousness with regard to the attempts at a political settlement and its exclusion of the peace option. Therefore, the settlement of the Soviet Jews in the occupied Arab territories is a very grave matter, which must be dealt with before it gets out of control.

It is curious that the United States, which for years addressed the question of the emigration of the Soviet Jews and brought to bear all the pressure at its disposal to enable them to emigrate, under the pretext of human rights, was the first to close its doors against those Jews emigrating to the United States. It is even more curious that the Zionist mass media, which raise a hue and cry over any alleged violation of the rights of Jews, did not criticize those actions, although they clearly violate human rights. Is not that sufficient evidence of the existence of an agreement between the United States Administration and the Zionist authorities to facilitate the herding of those emigrants like cattle to Israel, against all the values and slogans espoused by the United States?

The international community in general and the Arabs in particular expect the United States to end its policy biased in favour of Israel, and to honour its commitments as a super-Power responsible for international peace and security,

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especially as this new immigration will be a basic element in aggravating tension in the region and will jeopardize the prospects of achieving a permanent and just settlement on the basis of United Nations resolutions.

In his statement to the Council on 15 March the Israeli representative referred to the statement made by President Hafez Al-Assad on 8 March and quoted from it out of context President Assad's call for a holy war against Israel. Our reply is simple. All international norms and conventions, including the United Nations Charter, guarantee all peoples the right to regain their occupied territories, to regain the usurped rights of their citizens and to defend their territorial integrity. On that basis, Syria will spare no effort, regardless of the passage of time, to regain its usurped territories and its legitimate rights by all possible means in the Syrian Arab Golan and the other occupied Palestinian and Arab territories.

Recent developments in the peace process, the most recent of which was the fall of the Israeli Government, reveal the falsehood of the allegations of the representative of Israel to the effect that the Arabs still reject Israeli peace initiatives. In spite of the many concessions made by the Arabs in order to get the process going again, Shamir's Government persisted in its rejection. The British writer, Mr. Patrick Seale, summarized the Israeli policy of stalling before the fall of the Shamir Government as follows:

"The simple truth is that the men in power in Israel do not want to talk to the Palestinians. They will invoke a thousand pretexts and they will hatch a thousand plots so as not to sit down with the Palestinian delegation.

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"The so-called peace process does not revolve around an international conference, a comprehensive settlement, the Palestinian right to self-determination, recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization, or the principle of land in exchange for peace. No. It revolves around none of those substantive questions.

"In order to placate Israel, all of those questions have been set aside. It is well known that Shamir and the Likud bloc are ideologically committed to hanging on to all of so-called Eretz Israel under the slogan "Not a single inch". Such militants do not bend but can only be broken.

"Shamir believes that if, after saying 'Not a single inch', he were to make a minimal concession, that would be the beginning of the end and the concept of Greater Israel would be eliminated. Thus he says no, no and again no."

Mr. Patrick Seale concludes his commentary by stating as follows:

"I fear that the peace process is more of a mirage than actual negotiations. In actual fact, there are no genuine negotiations except for the current bargaining between Israel and the United States, which as usual revolves around American aid to Israel. Israel's supporters in the United States Congress are trying to increase American assistance to Israel from $3 billion to $4 billion annually, in addition to $400 million to be provided in the form of bank loans guaranteed by the United States Administration to help settle the Soviet Jews."

In conclusion I affirm that the Syrian Arab Republic is a State that cherishes peace based on justice and seeks a peaceful settlement of the Israeli-Arab conflict on the basis of relevant United Nations resolutions that guarantee the complete withdrawal of Israel from the occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem, and the restoration to the Palestinian Arab people of its inalienable rights, including its right to establish its own State on Palestinian soil.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic for his congratulations.

The next speaker is the representative of Indonesia. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. SUTRESNA (Indonesia): Mr. President, at the outset I should like on behalf of my delegation to express our appreciation to you and to the other members of the Security Council for giving me the opportunity to participate in the present deliberations.

Allow me also to extend to you, Sir, my delegation's congratulations upon your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of March. We are confident that, with your rich experience and diplomat skills, you will guide the proceedings in a constructive manner.

I should also like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada, Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations, for his able leadership of the Council during the month of February.

This meeting of the Security Council has been convened to deal with yet another policy pursued by Israel which makes it incumbent upon my delegation to participate in this debate.

The action taken by the Israeli Government in permitting the new wave of Jewish immigrants to settle in the West Bank constitutes yet another defiant step with potentially disastrous consequences. This plan comes in the wake of a long series of wanton violations of relevant United Nations resolutions and international conventions that forbid Israel to change the demographic composition of the occupied territories through the establishment of settlements. The new influx would irreversibly tilt the demographic balance, trample on the rights of the Palestinians and create heightened tension, thereby leading to a worsening of an already explosive situation. Indeed, such a policy will render the prospects

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for the peaceful settlement of the Middle East conflict in general, and of the Palestinian question in particular, infinitely more difficult.

It is clear that, notwithstanding claims that few immigrants would settle in the occupied territories, Israel's policy has reinforced suspicion that it intends to retain permanent control of those areas with a view to annexing them, thereby making a mockery of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. Israel's latest stance provides unambiguous confirmation of that belief and cannot but intensify the resistance to occupation exemplified by the intifadah.

Indonesia hails the brave Palestinians and commends the sacrifice and steadfastness with which they are confronting the occupation. We condemn the policies of oppression against unarmed freedom fighters who are struggling for fulfilment of their national aspirations. In this context we reaffirm the decision taken by the Ministerial Meeting of the Committee of Nine on Palestine of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries held this month at Tunis.

In this context my delegation calls upon Israel to refrain from actions that would further alter the physical character and demographic composition of the occupied territories. Unless the Council proceeds to take action as a matter of urgency, a fait accompli may be imposed on the indigenous inhabitants. The international community can no longer countenance Israeli intransigence, and Israel must be held accountable for its illegal policies and practices. The need for action has become increasingly urgent in view of the continued illegal measures taken for the establishment of new settlements, which is bound to have a profound impact on any endeavours to reach a peaceful solution.

It is Israel's responsibility to ensure that neither its own citizens nor citizens of other countries settle in the occupied territories in contravention of existing principles of international law. My delegation therefore calls upon Isreal unconditionally to abandon its policy of allowing new immigrants to settle in the occupied territories.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

Over the past two years developments of far-reaching importance have taken place concerning the question of Palestine, especially the intifadah, the sustained popular uprising which has conclusively established the irrepressible force of the struggle for self-determination, freedom, justice and human dignity. This places a solemn obligation on all of us to exert determined efforts through this body to bring an end to the tragic plight of the Palestinians.

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The occupied territories are at the core of any solution to the Middle East conflict. In that regard, my delegation reiterates its long-standing commitment to collective action by the international community to secure the withdrawal of Israel from all occupied territories and the exercise by the Palestinian people of its inalienable rights. In particular, we strongly urge the adoption of every means available to stop and reverse Israel's policies and actions designed to alter the physical character and demographic composition of, and to settle Israeli civilians and/or Jewish immigrants in, the occupied territories.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank the representative of Indonesia for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Saudi Arabia. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. AL-KAHTANY (Saudi Arabia) (interpretation from Arabic): It gives me pleasure to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I take personal pride in your election and in the very strong brotherly relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. I should like to express my great esteem for your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Cuba, and take this opportunity to welcome the new members of the Council for this year: the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, the Ivory Coast, Cuba, Romania and Zaire.

This meeting should have been convened to consider the issue of Arab human rights in Palestine and not have been confined to the Israeli policies of building settlements in the Arab lands. The policies and practices of the Israeli authorities have been repeatedly condemned by the United Nations, in all its organs and by all its Members. We meet today as a matter of reality under the shadow of a situation that has arisen, introducing a new factor into the Palestinian arena. The call to convene this meeting points to the effects and results of the

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establishment of Zionist settlements in the occupied Arab territories, which is the Zionist share of responsibility in this urgent situation.

Indeed, this urgent situation stems from the mass immigration of Jewish citizens of Eastern European countries from the land of their fathers and grandfathers to Israel, which is already too crowded and cannot support or sustain them. We have no objection to Soviet or any other citizens being granted the right to travel or to move outside their own country, providing such movement does not constitute aggression against another State. That is a right that should be enjoyed by citizens of all nationalities, including Palestinian citizens, whose right of return has been guaranteed by the United Nations.

But in that planned expansionist policy we see the danger of a rising population density feeding the Zionist policy of expansionist settlement. The leaders of Israel constantly proclaim their commitment to that policy and to its execution. What can be expected from the rulers of Palestine when half a million immigrants are sent there? The Security Council has condemned their settlement practices and expansionist actions for decades, but they have neither changed their mentality nor altered their ambitions or policies, so how can they be expected to do so now that they are being supplied with human and material power and the facilities for expansion and settlement? Are they going to respond to the Council's strong statements? Are they going to respect international law? Are they going to comply with the binding resolutions of the Security Council?

I do not believe that the Council has forgotten its experience with Zionist rulers. We sincerely hope that it will consider the effects of these forced waves of immigration to Israel on the situation in Palestine and the region. Israel does not recognize borders and does not adhere to agreements. This new wave of immigrants is the result of planning that prevents them from travelling to other countries that they may prefer, and thus offers them no choice.

(Mr. Al-Kahtany, Saudi Arabia)

It is said that the emigrés are just beginning to enjoy human rights. We know that the rights of one human being end at the point where the rights of another begin. When those rights are violated, that violation becomes aggression punishable by law.

The rights of the white man in South Africa have violated all the human rights of the blacks in that country. Punishment has therefore been called for. This is how human and national rights are violated. They have been violated in South Africa; yet it is now claimed that rapid change is on the way. In Palestine, they have been violated in the past, are being violated, and will be violated in the future; the situation is deteriorating.

Dangerous warning signs are not restricted to the violation of Arab human rights: they include the threat to Islamic sanctities and institutions in Palestine; the threat to Islamic and Arabic existence in Palestine; the threat to the security of the region as a result of that demographic concentration; the growing desire to expand as a result of the need to increase water and agricultural capabilities and the supply of resources and industrial power; the increasing ability to settle and absorb; and the expansion of settlements, with all that that entails, and with all its ugly purposes.

Those warnings must be taken seriously, and we hope that concerned countries will take all necessary measures to prevent any disturbance of the delicate situation in the region, to safeguard the region's security and stability, to protect the sanctity of the Holy Places, to safeguard the personal and communal rights of others, and to prevent a new escalation that will hamper all existing efforts towards peace.

What is regrettable and rather sad is that this development comes at a time when sentiment inside and outside Palestine has been aroused in support of the

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intifadah and when legions of martyrs are making the ultimate sacrifice for the human rights of Arabs on their land of Palestine.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia considers the mass and systematic immigration of Jews to Israel to be a violation of the rights of the Palestinian people, recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It also considers Israel's practice of settling some of its citizens and new immigrants in the occupied territories to be a violation of the fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949.

(Mr. Al-Kahtany, Saudi Arabia)

This mass immigration, and the Israeli policies and practices, are having grave effects on the attempts to reach a comprehensive and just peace in the Middle East. In condemning these policies and practices carried out by the occupying authorities, we request this lofty Council to take measures to compel the Israeli authorities to comply with their international legal obligations and desist from taking any action to change the demographic structure of the occupied territories, and we ask all States to refrain from providing any assistance that could be used in facilitating the building of settlements in the occupied territories and to apply on the occupying authorities the penalties mentioned in the United Nations Charter in case of non-compliance.

As members of the Council are facing up to their responsibilities in dealing with this subject today, I have no doubt that the issue of illegal settlements will, more than it did in the past, give rise to the condemnation, criticism and rejection commensurate with the dangerous and deteriorating situation, and that members will urgently take a steadfast and rational position on its causes so that it may be appropriately rectified.

Mr. LI Luye (China) (interpretation from Chinese): First of all, I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. China and Democratic Yemen have always enjoyed friendly relations. I am confident that under your guidance the Council will successfully complete its work this month. I wish also to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to His Excellency Ambassador Alarcon de Quesada of Cuba for his brilliant performance in guiding the Council's work last month as its President.

It is both highly necessary and timely, in our view, that the Security Council has decided to deliberate on the question of Jewish settlements in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories. The establishment of settlements by the

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Israeli authorities in the occupied Palestinian territory, including the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem and their acts of settling large numbers of immigrants there have constituted a gross violation of the provisions of the 1949 Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and, therefore, are illegal and should be stopped immediately.

For many years the Israeli authorities have, in open violation of the recognized norms of international law, set up settlements in the occupied territories in an attempt to alter the status quo and present a fait accompli, thus achieving their goal of perpetual occupation. In recent years, while intensifying their persecution and expulsion of the Palestinian residents in the West Bank and other parts of the occupied territory, the Israeli authorities have stepped up their efforts to bring in there an increasing number of Jewish settlers who have immigrated to Israel from other countries, and for this purpose they have even proposed that a "greater Israel" should be established. Such expansionist policy of the Israeli authorities poses a direct threat to the existence of the Palestinian people and the security of the Arab countries. Furthermore, it has aggravated the already tense situation in the Middle East region. In this connection my Government has issued a statement to express our condemnation.

The Chinese delegation proposes that the Security Council take unequivocal steps to stop the Israeli acts of settling large numbers of immigrants in the occupied territories. The international community, including the countries directly related to this situation, should give positive co-operation. Only by doing so can the legitimate rights and interests of the Palestinian people be maintained and further deterioration of the Middle East situation prevented.

The actions of the Israeli authorities described above have erected new barriers to the Middle East peace process and completely run counter to the prevailing tide in the world scene. In recent years the international situation

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has moved towards greater relaxation and some regional conflicts are on their way towards solution. In order to seek a fair settlement of the Middle East question, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the Arab countries have made many practical and positive initiatives. People have every reason to expect that a positive response could be made by the Israeli side. However, the Government of Israel has continued to stick to its intransigent position, rejecting the international Middle East conference on the one hand and refusing dialogues and talks with the PLO on the other, thus making it impossible to achieve any substantive progress in the efforts to solve the Middle East question and causing grave concern and anxiety in the international community. Such a state of affairs threatens peace and security in the Middle East and also in the world at large. Nor does it serve the interests of the Israeli people. We wish to call on the Israeli Government once again to go along with the historical trend, give up its erroneous Middle East policy and demonstrate good faith and flexibility, so as to facilitate the early solution of the Middle East question. As a permanent member of the Security Council, China will, as always, firmly support the just cause of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples and their reasonable propositions and endeavour to strive for a fair and reasonable settlement of the Middle East question.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank the representative of China for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is His Excellency Mr. Ergin Ansay, Permanent Observer of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, to whom the Council has extended an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. ANSAY: Mr. President, I should like to thank you and, through you, the other members of the Council for granting me this opportunity to participate in the discussion on a subject of particular concern to the Organization I represent.

May I at the outset convey my warmest congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the high office of President of the Security Council during this difficult period. We are confident that your vast experience in multilateral diplomacy and well-known professional skills will serve you well in the successful discharge of your stewardship vis-à-vis the complex task facing the Security Council in the coming days.

I should also like to take this opportunity to thank the Permanent Representative of Cuba, His Excellency Ambassador Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada, for his exemplary efficiency in guiding the work of the Council during the month of February.

(Mr. Ansay)

It is a well-known and oft-repeated fact that the cause of Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif is the prime cause of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the entire ummah, not only because of its justness but also because of the fact that Al-Quds Al-Sharif in Palestine is the first kiblah and the third holiest place for all Muslims. Therefore, the Organization of the Islamic Conference cannot and will not be indifferent towards any injustice inflicted by the occupying Power against the Palestinian people.

For more than four decades Israel's policies of expansionist aggression, ruthless oppression of the Palestinian people, provocative defiance of the will of the international community and intransigent flouting of all the norms of international law have been the single source of the unabated violence, tension and war in the Middle East. The ultimate designs of those policies - the permanent usurpation of the fundamental rights of the Palestinians and the liquidation of the Palestinian cause - are as transparent as they are futile.

The Palestinian people, through their intifadah, have once again demonstrated their determination to resist Israel's brutal policies of violent oppression, occupation, deportation, the judaization of Palestine, desecration of the Holy Places of Islam, the establishment of illegal settlements and the adoption of barbaric measures to silence the voice of freedom.

To defy the peace process and to attempt to crush the intifadah the Israeli authorities recently planned to settle the newly arriving immigrants in the occupied Palestinian territories in violation of the pertinent resolutions of the United Nations and the fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits the occupying Power from deporting individuals and from transfering parts of its own civilian population into the occupied territory. That plan and the massive exodus of Soviet Jews to occupied Palestine constitute a serious threat to security and stability in

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the region and are aimed, without a doubt, at changing the demographic character of Palestine and the Holy City of Al-Quds Al-Sharif.

The Organization of the Islamic Conference feels that the increased facilities extended by some countries for the continuation of this immigration and the encouragement of other countries which deny the emigrants access visas to their own countries thereby leaving no choice other than to go to Israel give rise to suspicions about the hidden reasons behind this upsurge of immigration, the more so since it coincides with the persistence and crescendo of the intifadah, followed by an increase in the number of murders, persecutions and deportations by the Israeli forces against the Palestinian population in the occupied territories.

The Organization of the Islamic Conference, which had already expressed its concern at this situation through its General Secretariat and which took action by means of high-level contacts between His Excellency Mr. Hamid Algabid, its Secretary-General, and the representatives of concerned Governments, condemns these plans, strongly condemns Israeli efforts towards the ridiculous megalo-idea of a "Greater Israel - Eretz Israel" and warns against their continuation, given the dangers that weigh heavily on the peace process in the region.

We firmly believe that the United Nations has a historical, particular and special responsibility towards Palestine. The eviction of the Palestinians from their homes and from their land and their immense sufferings and travails all originated from the decision taken by the United Nations some 40 years ago. The United Nations and the international community as a whole must therefore take serious cognizance of the Israeli policy regarding the occupied Palestinian territory.

(Mr. Ansay)

The Organization of the Islamic Conference is duty-bound once again to draw the attention of the Council to the harmful consequences of the continuation of Jewish immigration to occupied Palestine, which is expected to reach 1 million persons in a short time, and its dangerous effect on the historical rights of the Palestinian people and on peace in the Middle East. We should like to urge the Security Council and the international community to take urgent and appropriate action on this question of the exodus of Jewish emigrants and the intransigent policy of Israel in order to safeguard the rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State in their homeland under the aegis of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), their sole legitimate representative.

In that context, allow me to address briefly another relevant issue of extreme sensitivity for the Organization of the Islamic Conference: the status of the Holy City of Al-Quds Al-Sharif. We were surprised to learn just recently that the United States Senate had passed a resolution aimed at regarding the city of Al-Quds Al-Sharif as the undivided capital of the State of Israel. The General Secretariat of the Organization of the Islamic Conference strongly denounces the adoption of that resolution, which is in many respects a deliberate attempt to strengthen the position of those, especially in Israel, who oppose in an unreasonable and obstinate manner efforts currently deployed at the international level to encourage, on a healthy and legal basis, the peace process in the Middle East.

The General Secretariat of the Organization of the Islamic Conference has also taken note, with satisfaction, of the reaffirmation by President Bush of the reality and inviolability of the legal status of the city of Al-Quds Al-Sharif. It hereby calls on the United States Administration kindly to pursue its ongoing efforts aimed at finding a just and lasting settlement of the issue of Palestine and the Middle East.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): I thank Mr. Ansay for the kind words he addressed to me.

In view of the lateness of the hour, I intend to adjourn the meeting now. With the concurrence of members of the Council, the next meeting of the Security Council to continue the consideration of the item on the agenda will take place tomorrow, Wednesday, 28 March 1990, at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.